LAFAYETTE VISTAS

Published by the City of Lafayette

Winter 2025
Vol. 35, No. 1

Strong Community Spirit is a Factor in Resiliency

The devastating wildfires in Los Angeles are still on our minds, so this issue of *Vistas* highlights how the City is prepared to handle disasters, as well as steps you can take individually and with your neighbors towards readiness. We are all in this together, and the better equipped we are for wildfires or other disasters, the more resilient we will be as a community.

Being resilient means we are able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions. Building up that resiliency can take many forms, and is bolstered by Lafayette's longstanding ethos of "communitarianism" – the community's commitment to embracing volunteerism, community spirit, and working together for the common good. In this issue, you will also read about ways you can get involved in our community such as sharing your feedback and knowledge with the City Council, rolling up your sleeves on Community Day, and participating in events put on by the Lafayette Chamber that support our local businesses. There's also an update on Measure H, which was passed by voters in November to maintain current City services and programs.

Are you Ready for Wildfire?

Scan this QR code with your smart phone or visit our webpage, www.lovelafayette.org/ready to find out additional ways you can be ready:

- ✔ Read the Lamorinda Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation.
- ✔ Make sure you are signed up for emergency alerts (via CWS & Nixle) so we can reach you directly if there is a threat to life or property.
- ✔ Create an emergency plan for your household, taking into account pets/animals and people with special needs.
- ✔ Know what to do when there is a Red Flag Warning (elevated fire risk).
- ✔ Work with your neighbors to obtain Firewise certification for your neighborhood.
- ✔ Find out if your home is in a high risk area for wildfires, and if so, undertake defensible space and home hardening measures to reduce the risk to your property.
- ✔ Consider taking CERT training.
- ✔ Identify your evacuation zone number and practice how your family will evacuate in case of an emergency.

Wildfire Prevention Remains a Top City Priority

During the past several years, Lafayette has prioritized reducing the risk of a major wildfire. Completed and continuing projects the City has undertaken include:

- Publishing the **Lamorinda Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation**. This comprehensive guidebook (created in 2019 and updated in 2022) was put together by the cities of Lafayette, Orinda, Moraga, along with the Contra Costa Fire Protection District (Con Fire), the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department, and Lamorinda's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). It has since become a model for other communities. If you don't already have a copy of the guide you can download it at: **bit.ly/Lamorinda_Wildfire_Guide**.

- Continually enhancing the City's Emergency Operations Plan led by our City's **Emergency Preparedness Commission.**

- Creating a dedicated Emergency Services Coordinator position within the Police Department to focus on enhancing the City's ability to respond to and manage a large-scale disaster, as well as to improve community preparedness and install early-warning systems where possible.

- Conducting an evacuation drill involving residents of the Springhill neighborhood in 2019 to evaluate contra-flow traffic control (both lanes of roadway used for vehicle traffic flow in one direction).

- Utilizing **Genasys Protect** – an evacuation planning tool to aid Police and Fire departments in evacuating residents more safely and efficiently by using pre-designated zones.

- Completing an **Evacuation Route Analysis** in 2022 that studied multiple mass-evacuation scenarios.

- Participating in evacuation exercises for police, fire, CERT, City Staff, and Search and Rescue, including virtual evacuation drills using the Contra Costa Sheriff 's **Community Warning System** (CWS).

- Establishing **AM1670**, an emergency information radio station broadcast in the Lamorinda area.

- Launching the **My Lafayette Mobile App**, which among other things, provides an easy and convenient option for tuning into AM1670 and accessing the Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation Guidebook.

- Modifying traffic signal poles to be able to run traffic signals off generators during a power outage, and partnering with PG&E to install a generator transfer switch at the Lafayette Community Center to power that facility during a PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

- Purchasing a new remotely-controlled mower to more safely and efficiently remove vegetation on the slopes of City parks and open space.

- Joining the **ALERTWildfire** program and took the lead to install and maintain a network of cameras across Contra Costa and Alameda Counties to detect, alert, and monitor wildfires.

- Providing emergency radios to each public and private school campus, along with the Lamorinda School Bus Program, to allow direct communications with law enforcement and fire in an emergency. The radios are tested monthly by school staff.

- Encouraging—and supporting—neighborhoods joining the **Firewise Program** (25 and counting!).

- Updating the **Tree Protection Ordinance** which now includes new fire-sensitive regulations.

- Updating the **Safety Element** which identifies natural and human-caused hazards in Lafayette and provides recommendations to increase the community's resilience to these risks. You can find this plan online at **lovelafayette.org/SafetyElement**.

- Purchasing and outfitting an **Emergency Command Trailer** as well as an off-road vehicle (UTV) that has an 85 gallon fire suppression unit.

- Partnering with **Con Fire** for brush and weed clearing along major evacuation routes.

- Performing annual maintenance at City parks, trails and open spaces including tree trimming, clearing deadwood and brush as well as soil discing (tilling), and widened some trails in Community Park.

- Supporting Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA)'s development of a Countywide Emergency Evacuation Plan, which will include local-level evacuation assessments and a high-level analysis of evacuation route capacity, safety, and viability.

- Working with **Con Fire** to support their process to adopt updated **Fire Hazard Severity Zones** this spring based on new recommendations from the State Fire Marshall.

Ways to Get Involved

Much of what makes our community so special are the dedicated volunteers and impactful partnerships that truly make a difference. Here are some ways you can get involved with the City this year:

Share Your Voice

The current Lafayette City Council are Mayor Susan Candell, Vice Mayor Carl Anduri, and Councilmembers Jim Cervantes, Gina Dawson, and John McCormick. These five residents were elected by Lafayette voters and serve in a volunteer capacity to represent the best interests of our community. The Council sets goals and priorities for the City, approves the budget, adopts policies (often referred to as ordinances), and appoints members to various boards and commissions.

You are always welcome to attend and provide comments at City Council meetings, which are typically held on the second and fourth Monday of each month. We also offer a hybrid option so you can watch and comment remotely. To stay up to date on what topics the Council is discussing, sign-up to receive the agendas via email at **lovelafayette.org/e-notification**. To find out how you can provide comments to the Council about topics they are considering, go to **lovelafayette.org/council**.

Share your Expertise and Passion by Serving on a City Advisory Body

Do you want to help make a difference in our community? Volunteering to serve on one of the City's advisory boards can be a rewarding way to give back and plays an important role in accomplishing goals that may not otherwise be achievable. Learn more at **lovelafayette.org/commissions**. For more information about advisory body meetings and how to apply to serve, visit **lovelafayette.org/volunteers** or contact the City Clerk's office at **jrobbins@lovelafayette.org**.

Spend the Day with Us!

Save the date of Saturday, **May 3, 2025** for the 4th annual Lafayette Community Day! This day of service and celebration is presented by the Lafayette Community Foundation in partnership with the City of Lafayette and the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Volunteer registration will open April 7 at **lafayettecommunityday.org**. There will be projects for individuals, families and groups including gardening, picking up litter, painting, cleaning/organizing, collecting donations for the food bank, and more! Questions? Email **info@lafayettecommunityday.org.**

Gas-powered Leaf Blowers Prohibited in Lafayette

Gasoline-powered leaf blowers pollute the air, are harmful to operators and bystanders, and create high levels of noise. In fact, operating a gas-powered leaf blower for one hour emits the same amount of pollution as a one-way trip from Los Angeles to Denver! With that in mind, the City's Environmental Task Force (ETF) led the effort behind the City's ban on the use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers, which went into effect on July 1, 2024.

So, if you haven't already made the switch, it's time to ditch the gas-powered blower and instead use an electric leaf blower/vacuum or manual tools such as rakes/push brooms/leaf sweepers.

For more information and resources, visit **lovelafayette.org/leaf-blowers.**

In December, the City said farewell to Police Chief Ben Alldritt and welcomed new Lafayette Police Chief, **James "Jamie" Williams**. Chief Williams is a U.S. Navy veteran with more than 20 years' experience in law enforcement. Under his leadership, community trust and collaboration will remain at the heart of the Police Department's approach to keeping our community safe. When you see him around town, be sure to say hello!

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Lafayette Voters Approve Measure H

Sales Tax Rate to Increase April 1

Measure H, the ½ cent sales tax measure, was approved by voters in November. Measure H will go into effect on April 1, 2025 for a period of seven years. The increase brings Lafayette's sales tax rate to 9.25%, which is the same rate as Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill.

It is estimated that the sales tax will generate approximately $2.4 million annually for city services and programs, including maintaining public streets, wildfire preparedness, police services, traffic safety, senior and youth programs, etc.

If you are a local business owner or manager and have questions about the Measure H sales tax, go to **www.lovelafayette.org/MeasureH** or send us an email at **LafayetteListens@lovelafayette.org**. Please note, if you have technical questions about tax collection, we will refer you to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA).

Save The Date!

The Lafayette Chamber's annual **Taste of Lafayette Restaurant Stroll** will take place on **Tuesday, May 20**. Be sure to get tickets for Lafayette's favorite dinner party featuring more than 20 restaurants offering samples and live music. Learn more at **LafayetteChamber.org/events**.

© Lafayette Chamber

CITY DIRECTORY

Council Members

Susan Candell	Mayor
Carl Anduri	Vice Mayor
Jim Cervantes	Councilmember
Gina Dawson	Councilmember
John McCormick	Councilmember

For Council Members call: 925-284-1968
Messages to all Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

City Departments

Main Offices 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
City Manager – Niroop K. Srivatsa
General Reception 925-284-1968

Administration 925-284-1968

Admin. Services Director – Tracy Robinson
City Clerk – Joanne Robbins

Engineering Services & Public Works

Director & City Engineer – Mike Moran
Engineering Dept. 925-284-1951
Code Enforcement 925-299-3279
Maintenance/Corp. Yard 925-934-3908
Submit Public Works maintenance requests online at:
lovelafayette.org/maintenance-request
Report illegal dumping into waterways and accidental spills to Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 925-646-2286

Parks, Trails, Recreation 500 St. Mary's Rd

Director – Jonathan Katayanagi
Youth/Adult Recreation,
Parks & Trails 925-284-2232
Senior Services 925-284-5050
Lafayette Spirit Van 925-283-3534
lovelafayette.org/rec

Planning & Building 925-284-1976

Director – Greg Wolff
Building Department 925-655-2704
lovelafayette.org/Planning

Police Services 3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Police Chief – James Williams
Emergency (24 Hours): 911
Non-emergency Dispatch
(24 Hours): 925-284-5010
Administrative Office: 925-283-3680
Sign up for emergency alerts:
lovelafayette.org/ready

City Website: ***www.lovelafayette.org***

Connect with us on social media and sign-up for agenda notices:
lovelafayette.org/connect